

alongside with his sisters in the little cemetery by the brook. When we held the wake for him some days after he died, I placed inside his casket a few items to see him across the River Styx: his favorite rosary, the TV remote control—private joke—a jar of peanut butter, and my mother's ashes. I can hear her saying, "Bill—what is that disgusting substance leaking all over me?" No pharaoh went off to the afterlife better equipped than he does.

The last time I was with him in Sharon was last October. It was a fundraiser for the local library, billed as "A Bevy of Buckleys"—my dad, Uncle Jim, Aunt Pitts, Aunt Carol, me—reading from the aggregate Buckley oeuvre—a word I first heard from his lips many years ago, along with other exotic, multi-lingual bon mots: *mutatis mutandis*; *pari passu*; *quod licet Jove, non licet bovi*.

An article had appeared in the local paper a few days before, alerting the community to this gala event. As I perused the clipping, my eyes alighted on the sentence: "The Buckleys are a well-known American family, William F. Buckley being arguably the best known."

I kept my amusement to myself, and handed Pup the clipping and waited silently for the reaction I knew would come. Sure enough, within seconds, he looked up with what I would describe as only faintly bemused indignation and said, "Arguably?"

He was—inarguably—a great man. This is, from a son's perspective, a mixed blessing, because it means having to share him with the wide world. It was often a very mixed blessing when you were out sailing with him. Great men always have too much canvas up. And great men set out from port in conditions that keep lesser men—such as myself—safe and snug on shore. One October day in 1997, I arrived from Washington in Stamford for a long-planned overnight sail. As the train pulled into the station, I looked out and saw people hanging onto lampposts at 90-degree angles, trying not to be blown away by the northeast gale that was raging. Indeed, it resembled a scene from *The Wizard of Oz*. When the train doors opened, I was blown back into the carriage by the 50-mile-an-hour wind. I managed to crawl out onto the platform, practically on all fours, whereupon my father greeted me with a chipper, "We'll have a brisk sail."

I looked up at him incredulously and said, "We're going out in this?" Indeed we did go out in it. We always went out in it. Some of my earliest memories are of my mother, shrieking at him as the water broke over the cockpit and the boat pitched furiously in boiling seas, "Bill—Bill! Why are you trying to kill us?"

But the cries of timorous souls never phased him. He had been going out in it for years, ever since he published his first book, *God and Man At Yale*. Nor did he need a sailboat to roil the waters. His *Royal* typewriter—and later, *Word Star*—would do.

How many words flowed from those keyboards. I went up to Yale recently to inspect his archive of papers. They total 550 linear feet. To put it in perspective, the spire of St. Patrick's rises 300 feet above us. By some scholarly estimates, he may have written more letters than any other American in history. Add to that prodigious output: 6,000 columns, 1,500 *Firing Line* episodes, countless articles, over 50 books. He was working on one the day he died.

Jose Marti famously said that a man must do three things in life: write a book, plant a tree, have a son. I don't know that my father ever planted a tree. Surely whole forests, whole eco-systems, were put to the axe on his account. But he did plant a lot of seeds and many of them, grown to fruition, are here today. Quite a harvest, that.

It's not easy coming up with an epitaph for such a man. I was tempted by something Mark Twain once said, "Homer's dead, Shakespeare's dead, and I myself am not feeling at all well."

Years ago, he gave an interview to *Playboy* Magazine. Asked why he did this, he couldn't resist saying, "In order to communicate with my 16-year-old son." At the end of the interview, he was asked what he would like for an epitaph and he replied, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Only Pup could manage to work the Book of Job into a Hugh Hefner publication. I finally settled on one, and I'll say the words over his grave at sunset today in Sharon, as we lay him to rest. They're from a poem he knew well—Robert Louis Stevenson's *Requiem*—each line of which, indeed, seemed to have been written just for him:

Under the wide and starry sky
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live, and gladly die.
And I lay me down with a will.
This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be.
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Virginia has 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. I would yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE).

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Mr. PENCE. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for the privilege of having the opportunity to speak in favor of this important resolution expressing the condolences of the House of Representatives on the death of William F. Buckley, Jr. I also want to thank the Democratic leadership of the Congress for scheduling this bill and giving this Congress and this country an opportunity to express appreciation for an extraordinary American life.

This resolution was introduced by Congressman TOM FEENEY. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the bill. I want to thank Congressman TOM FEENEY for his leadership and his compassionate attentiveness in bringing this legislation before the Congress. Congressman FEENEY cannot be with us today. He is on a congressional delegation trip to China. But I know that were he here, he would regale this floor and those watching in with his deep affection and appreciation for the life and work of William F. Buckley, Jr.

As this resolution attests, William F. Buckley, Jr., was an American hero and an intellectual leader of the conservative movement for more than five decades. As the previous speaker just alluded, he led in a manner that earned both the respect and the friendship of his political adversaries.

William F. Buckley, from his many years on television, the program, *Firing Line*, which was the longest running political television program in the history of American television, he demonstrated that wit and sharpness and civility can all go together, and it is a lesson that I suspect many of us on an ongoing basis can continue to learn

and apply in the institutions of our government.

By virtue of his distinct personality, his talents, his humor and his goodwill, William F. Buckley has been recognized as the premier conservative intellectual in post-World War II America. He once commented that he would "rather live in a society governed by the first 2,000 names in the Boston phone directory than in one governed by the 2,000 members of the Harvard faculty." It was that kind of rapier wit, beginning with the publication of his book "God and Man at Yale," that ended up resulting in the publication of thousands of books, thousands of columns, and thousands of debates that turned him into a force of nature in the American public debate.

We also recognize him as a man who played a critical role in helping this Nation understand the great calling of his generation, which inasmuch as the calling of the greatest generation, was to confront Nazism and fascism.

William F. Buckley and his intellect and his capacity for elocution managed to help focus the Nation on the threat of Soviet communism and the realities of the Soviet Union, and I believe that history will record that it was William F. Buckley, Jr., perhaps more than any other American, who outside of government influenced the leadership in the 1980s that led to the collapse of Soviet communism and the Soviet Union.

Upon the election of Ronald Reagan, it was reported to me once that William F. Buckley was asked what position he would like to have in the new Reagan Administration, to which he apparently put his hand in his jacket pocket and replied with a twinkle in his eye, "ventriloquist." And in many respects William F. Buckley was a ventriloquist for so many of us in public life, reading his columns, reading his books, having from time to time the privilege of watching him long distance or in person as he made the case for limited government. He made the case for traditional values. He made the case for the American ideal of freedom, here at home and on a global basis. We, all of us, were happy to have that extraordinary intellect and heart filled with goodwill pull the strings on our careers and guide us and direct us.

So, I join my colleagues, and especially Congressman TOM FEENEY, in taking this moment to give honor and thanks to William F. Buckley, Jr., for all he did to advance the vision for America and a capitalist democratic vision for the world and to express the profound sorrow this Nation feels upon his death.

The Bible says if you owe debts, pay debts; if honor, then honor; if respect, then respect. Today, thanks to the leadership in the minority and the generosity of the majority, Congress and the American people will have the opportunity once more to pay a debt of gratitude to this great American, who was William F. Buckley, Jr.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve my time.